12.00 Noon

STATEMENT BY MINISTER CORRECTING ANSWER TO QUESTION

Correcting the reply given in the Rajya Sabha on the 31st July, 1997 to Starred Question 127 regarding setting up of major hospital in Nagpur

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI): Sir, in reply to Rajya Sabha Starred Question No. 127 for 31.7.1997, the following answer was given:—

(a) No such representation has been received in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

(b) Does not arise.

SHRI MD. SALIM (West Bengal): Sir, I have...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let him read it.

SHRI MD. SALIM: No, that is relating to this point. Sir, last time and on several other occasions, we have raised this point. When a Minister comes with an answer for a Starred Question, the Members have a right to seek clarifications or put supplementaries. If it is an Unstarred Question, we have no problem. But, here the hon. Minister is correcting a question which came as a Starred Question. So, the Members' right to put supplementaries on that answer is denied. Sir, whenever such corrections come, I raise this question. Here I seek your protection. I want a direction from you that when the Ministers come with correction for Starred Question, the Members should be given an opportunity to seek clarifications or put supplementaries.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I shall look into it.

SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI:

(c) & (d) There is no such proposal under consideration of the Central Government. 'Health' being a State subject under the Constitution, the State Government frame their own plans for opening of hospitals depending upon the felt needs of the people of the area and the availability of resources.

The letter dated 7.5.1997 of hon. M.P., Miss Saroj Khaparde was inadvertantly directed to the Department of Family Welfare who sent it to the Directorate General of Health Services because it related to setting up a hospital. The question was answered by the Department of Health but due to the mix-up in handling the letter, the reply given in Rajya Sabha did not take into account the receipt of the letter. The correct reply of the question may be read as under:—

(a) Yes, Sir. A letter dated 7.5.1997 has been received from Miss Saroj Khaparde, M.P. (Rajya Sabha), for setting up a hospital for providing gynaecological and maternity related services to the rural women in Vidarbha region.

(b) to (d): 'Health' being a State subject under the Constitution, the State Government frame their own plans for opening of hospitals depending upon the felt needs of the people of the area and the availability of resources. Programmes such as Child Survival and Safe Motherhood Programme are being implemented to provide health care relevant to the needs of the community, including women. Government of Maharashtra have separately approved a proposal for construction of a 250-bedded general hospital in North Nagpur area.

As soon this came to notice, immediate steps were taken to correct the reply. This correcting statement was sent to the Rajya Sabha Secretariat on 19th November, 1997 for being laid on the Table of the House. However, this was not laid during that session as the House could not transact any business and finally adjourned *sine die* on 1st December, 1997. Since the next session was of a very short duration and for a specific purpose, it is proposed to lay this statement now during the 184th Session.

The inconvenience caused to the House is regretted.

MR. CHAIRMAN: As far as I have seen—I am told that according to "The Rajya Sabha at Work", the Member in response to whom the earlier answer was given and which is sought to be corrected by the Minister, may be allowed to seek a brief clarification after the statement is made. The supplementary question on the correction may also be permitted at the discretion of the Chairman. Now, I would permit Shri Salim to put the supplementary to the hon. Minister, if he so desires.

SHRI MD. SALIM: Sir, it is not a question of my putting a question. It is a question of the right of the House. I am thankful to you that you have accepted it. Had it been laid on the Table of the House, the question could not have arisen. The Minister has read out the entire answer without circulating the answer to the Members. The question is the Minister should not have read out the entire statement in the form of correcting the earlier answer without circulating it to the Members. He has circulated it to the concerned Member and not to other Members. Sir, in spite of your intervention, other Members' right to seek clarifications and putting supplementaries has been denied.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

I. Report and Accounts (1996-97) of the various Chemical and Fertilizer Companies and related papers.

II. Memoranda of understanding (1998-99) between Govt. of India and Chemical and Fertilizer Companies and related papers.

III. Report and Accounts (1996-97) of Institute of Pesticide Formulation technology Gurgaon and Krishak Bharti Coop. Ltd. New Delhi and related papers.

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND THE MINISTER OF FOOD (SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA): Sir, I lay on the Table—

I. (1) A copy each (in English and Hindi) of the following papers, under sub-section (1) of section 619A of the Companies Act, 1956:—

(i) (a) Nineteenth Annual Report and Accounts of the Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation Limited, New Delhi, for the year 1996-97, together with the Auditors' Report on the Accounts and the comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General of Indian Thereon.

(b) Review by Government on the Working of the Above Corporation.

[Placed in Library. *See* No. LT-288/98]

(ii) (a) Nineteenth Annual Report and Accounts of the Projects and Development India Limited, Dhanbad, (Bihar), for the year 1996-97, together with the Auditors' Report on the Accounts and the comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India thereon.

(b) Review by Government on the Working of the Above Company.

[Placed in Library. *See* No. LT-293/98]

(iii) (a) Forty-first Annual Report and Accounts of the Fertilizer Corporation of India Limited, New Delhi, for the year 1996-97, together with the Auditors' Report on the Accounts and the comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India thereon.

(b) Review by Government on the Working of the Above Corporation.

[Placed in Library. *See* No. LT-289/98]